

have to fund political contributions and candidates they do not support. The administration, by Executive order, refuses to enforce the Beck decision.

So when we hear the term "campaign reform," it means making the Beck decision law; it means removing this injustice that Thomas Jefferson called sinful and tyrannical, it means freeing up the workers of this country.

CONSIDER CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM THIS YEAR

(Mr. SNYDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 1995, the President and Speaker of the House, in a very famous photo of shaking hands, committed themselves to campaign finance reform. It has been over 2 years later. We have had 85 bills filed. There have been no hearings on campaign finance reform. There have been no bills passed.

The President will support campaign finance reform, Mr. Speaker. This House and the House leadership needs to step forward and let this body consider campaign finance reform this year. My own preference is the freshmen bipartisan bill, the Hutchinson-Allen bill. There are other good bills out there, but they will get nowhere without hearings and without being brought to the floor of this House. We need to do our job this year on campaign finance reform.

FOLLOW MINNESOTA'S LEAD IN EDUCATION

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my Governor, Arne Carlson, of Minnesota. Back in Minnesota we are very proud of our schools and we are very proud of our students. Many people listen to Garrison Keiler when he talks about Lake Wobegone, and sometimes we talk about the Lake Wobegone syndrome.

In fact, we do believe our women are strong, our men are good looking, and our children are above average. And there is reason to believe that. If we look at the numbers, Minnesota students rank second in graduation rate. On the ACT test, we once again ranked in second place in all of the United States in 1996. But that is the good news.

The bad news is, in some of the tests that we have been giving our students in the last several years on basic skills, Minnesota students are not doing as well as they should. In reading, for example, we asked students to read a few newspaper articles, then answer some questions, and only 59 percent of the students passed that test.

That is why Governor Carlson, together with the legislature, began a

process this year of real reform of our schools, and that was built around choices and giving parents more empowerment. It is tax credits. It is empowering parents with more deductibility for educational expenses.

We in Washington ought to do the same. In fact, they say back in Minnesota, either lead, follow, or get out of the way. In terms of education reform, we ought to follow the lead of Governor Carlson and other brave Governors who are empowering parents to get better education for their kids.

NATIONAL STUDENT TESTING IS NOT THE ANSWER

(Mr. COOK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, the latest great idea from the administration to improve education is national testing. After all, who could be against a proposal that will make it easier to see how your school is doing and make it easier to compare your children against the performance of students nationwide?

I guess my first reaction is that we do not need a national test to discover that a school with fourth graders who do not read has a big problem. We do not need a national test to figure out that something is terribly wrong when kids graduate from high school feeling just wonderful about themselves but are unable to write a coherent paragraph.

The bottom line is, we do not need a national test to determine that our schools are failing us and failing the communities which support them. It is as if the other side actually believes that the same schools that do not enforce standards now will suddenly do so if Washington comes up with a new test.

If academic rigor is absent in our schools now, call it a hunch, but I am guessing that rigor will be absent in our schools after the latest national test is created.

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SCHOOL CHOICE

(Mr. WELDON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my question is, Would a plan to make it easier for parents to save for their children's college education be a good thing or a bad thing? What if their children took that money and used it to go to a private university like Harvard? Would that be a threat to public universities like the University of Michigan or the University of Virginia? Or would that make schools like the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia try even harder to compete for students that might otherwise go to Harvard?

If allowing parents to send their kids to Harvard is not a threat to public universities, why would making it a little easier for parents to send their kids to private schools be a threat to public schools at the elementary and secondary level? Could it be that many parents would vote with their feet and take their kids out of bad public schools and put them in private schools? That would force bad schools to clean up their act or shut down, which is exactly the point.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, another week has gone by in Washington, and still the Republican leadership has not scheduled a vote on campaign finance reform. Delay has always been the strategy of those who are opposed to curbing the influence of special interest money. We cannot accept delay any longer.

My colleagues and I are demanding that Speaker GINGRICH schedule a vote to ban soft money, the huge unregulated contributions to both political parties that have corrupted our political process in Congress. But the Speaker's response is there is not time, or the Speaker's response is what we need is more money in our election system. That is wrong.

Tomorrow afternoon the Republicans hope to leave work early in the day to travel to New York City to hold a massive fund raiser. Apparently there is enough time in the congressional schedule to leave early and fly to New York on private jets to raise money, but there is not enough time to schedule a vote on campaign finance reform and to ban soft money. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, to me, to my colleagues, and to the majority of the American people.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE IN CURRENT LAW

(Mrs. CHENOWETH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, most children have tried the tactic we are now seeing from the other side regarding the White House scandals and campaign finance reform. If you catch a child with his hands in the cookie jar, sometimes he tries to change the subject on that which they are doing, and if they cannot successfully change the subject, then they get angry.

Most parents see right through what their child is trying to do to escape punishment for disobeying their parents. Fortunately, thank goodness, most Americans are able to see through the hypocrisy of Democrats who claim to want to ban soft money, the very same people who have raised illegal fund raising from foreign sources to an art form.